MONTEREY NEWS

December 2001
VOLUME XXXI · Number 12

The Town

Town Appointments

The Selectboard has made several appointments in the past month to various boards and councils.

Mark Makuc has been appointed to the Board of Appeals to serve the unexpired term recently vacated by the resignation of Peter Vallianos.

Three members of the Cultural Council have been reappointed for another term: Al Goldfarb, Lois Ryder, and Eileen Lawlor.

Officer Sherry Johnson has been appointed as Monterey D.A.R.E. officer. Ms. Johnson, a Sheffield police officer, has been, and will continue, offering the Monterey Kindergarten age appropriate education as it relates to safety and awareness of the dangers of substance abuse. She will also serve the youth of Monterey who attend Undermountain and Mount Everett as they receive the D.A.R.E. program at school.

Hy Rosen

Scene at the community dinner on November 14 (article on p. 2)

Special Town Meeting Nov. 30

As this goes to print a special town meeting has been scheduled at 7 p.m., Friday, November 30, at the Fire Hall. There are four articles for consideration three having to do with transfers of funds from Free Cash for forest fire fighting equipment, a fund for clerical assistance, and the purchase of a truck for the Highway Department. The fourth article is for the appropriation of $158,000 to complete the addition to the Town Offices. A report of the results of that meeting will be available on-line at the Town of Monterey website and in the January edition of the *Monterey News*.

Green Schools Pilot Program

The Selectboard has begun a very preliminary exploration of the possibility of taking advantage of a pilot program being offered through a collaboration between Massachusetts Department of Education and the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative's "Renewable Energy Trust." The goal of the collaboration is to encourage the building of "a new generation of energy efficient, high performance school buildings throughout the Commonwealth."

Monterey is exploring the possibility of receiving some funding for a feasibility study to assess possible use of the Edith Wilson property or some other location in town as a Community School. This will include examination of using existing structures and building new buildings which would serve both the community and school-age children in town. Fred Chapman attended a presentation by the Mass. Technology Collaborative recently and there is interest on the Selectboard to gather further information on the initiative to see if Monterey is a suitable site and if the project meets the needs of Monterey.

Special Event Planned for May 3, 2002

The Selectboard would like all Montereyans to save Friday May 3, 2002 (not Memorial Day weekend) for a very special event honoring four revered retirees who have served Monterey long and

well: Harry Gustafson, Gige O'Connell, Don Amstead, and Walter Parks. So reserve the date; the time and place will be announced closer to the event.

Special Thanks to Jan and George Emmons

The Selectboard would like to recognize and appreciate the generous donation of the bulbs planted in recent weeks by Jan and George Emmons on the slope above the rock wall on the Route 23 entrance to Bidwell Park. Not only does the Board appreciate their generosity in purchasing and donating the bulbs, but also the huge and gracious effort they put into clearing, mowing, and planting all the bulbs. The whole town will appreciate the beautiful flowers for years to come. So let us all join the Board in thanking the Emmonses on sight.

— Amy Goldfarb

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Revived Community Dinner Scrumptious Success

Next Dinner Set for Dec. 13

Some fifty Monterey folks feasted (say that three times, fast) at the first revival of the long-standing tradition of Monterey Community Dinners, at the Meeting House, on November 14.

With a theme of "harvest and gratitude," your good neighbors assembled an assortment of culinary delights.

To name a few, savory salads, delicious deviled eggs, luscious squash casseroles, outrageous roasted potatoes, and an ensemble of entrees made to make your mouth water, including a plump, cooked-to-perfection turkey, courtesy of Steve and Sally Pullen. An irresistible dessert cart, navigated by Jonah Carlson, toured tables providing the perfect finishing touch. How sweet it was!

After dinner, the enchanting David McAllester sang for his supper, a medley of Native American songs, requesting the crowd to join in, which they did with fervor. An Algonquin sing-along—who would've imagined! Songs saluting beans and fish, revered Indian dietary staples, rose from the room. David also delighted diners with the unexpected—singing songs translated as "Girlfriend, buy me a car and we'll go home in style," and a wannabe love song, "I wish your husband would take a long trip." Thank you, Mr. McAllester, for that enlightening, most enjoyable experience.

And kudos to Kathy Frome (formerly Kathy Maye) for launching and leading the dinner committee. Kathy is also the Lake Garfield Association president, in addition to wearing many other community-minded hats. How does she do it?

If you missed this warm, memorable evening, make sure not to miss the next one, December 13. MaryKate Jordan will be doing a presentation on the theme of "Light" related to the holidays and the solstice.

Bring a delicious dish that serves eight to ten people. We'll supply beverages. Please bring your own table settings. Dinners will be at the Meetinghouse, at 6:00 p.m., on the following dates:

Thursday, December 13
Wednesday, January 9
Thursday, February 14
Wednesday, March 13
Thursday, April 11
Wednesday, May 8
Thursday, June 13

— Hy Rosen

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State Certification of Monterey Firefighters Addressed

Lewis Scheffey (left) accepts Certificate of Salute and Commendation from State Senator Andrea Nuciforo (second from left) and from Chief Ray Tryon (second from right) and Asst. Chief Maynard Forbes for his family's outstanding support of the Fire Company. The award was made at the recent Firemen's Ball in the Monterey Firehouse, attended by over 100 townspeople.

Mark Makuc and Scott Sheridan of the Monterey Fire Department have been qualified to give instructional training to other volunteers, in a move instituted by the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy in Stow to require our firefighters to be certified eventually according to elaborate mandated requirements.

Two comprehensive and laborious volumes of a program entitled Firefighter 1 are in the possession of the Monterey Fire Department, and Harry Jennings, the new Fire Chief in Great Barrington, already has a blueprint in place to coordinate the 100 hours of extra training per year for this certification with existing hours of training each month. The state program is based upon N.F.P.A. 2001 standards as authorized by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council. Other surrounding states have already adopted these mandates.

Monterey and Great Barrington Fire Chiefs are just two of seven others belonging to the Southern Berkshire Fire Chiefs Association, which also includes the companies of Alford, Egremont, Sheffield, Sandisfield, and Stockbridge. So far a total of thirty-four of their firemen have subscribed to participate, which is very commendable, considering the complications and additional work and hours that will be required. For all the towns, and Monterey in particular, the inevitable question to be asked is, "Do we really need all this?" Even though the state may fund up to $8000 for several supporting programs, most of the price that must be paid is the time, effort, and dedication of our volunteers.

According to Ray Tryon, Monterey Fire Chief, there may be some decided advantages for cross training and effective mutual aid if all towns have a single standard of proficiency, as well as sharing training facilities, but it concerns him that our volunteers may be turned off by the hassle of having to prepare to give the courses for the state, as well as by having to take a test, after putting in all this extra time, to find out if they can qualify. There are already some forty separate public safety subjects on the proposed itinerary, and each one requires at least three hours to cover. Monterey is already well ahead of basic requirements in all areas of public safety. If there is a hidden agenda on the part of the Firefighters Union to discourage volunteers and promote full-time paid fighters, it might be a good thing for towns that can afford it, but Monterey is not headed in that direction. We should be concerned! There will be more on this issue, and we will keep you advised, requesting that you express your own concerns or your support.

— George Emmons

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Bad Housekeeping

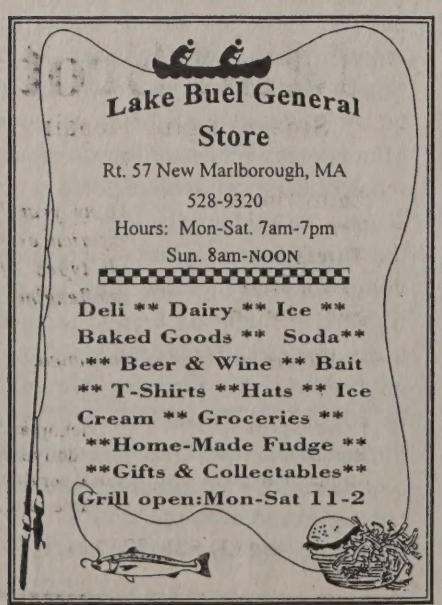
A disturbing episode in the civic life of Monterey recently came to a sorry conclusion when attorney Peter Vallianos resigned from the Monterey Zoning Board of Appeals. After serving with him on that board for fifteen years, I will miss his inquiring spirit and quick mind. I will also miss his chairmanship: hearings conducted by Peter brought a friendly, unpretentious quality to sharp legal analysis. Teapot tempests will always be with us; in this case, we had a passing shower and someone ran up a hurricane warning.

Peter resigned after nearly a year of discussions with the state Ethics Commission regarding his role in the July 2000 hearing for a Monterey couple seeking a special permit from the Board of Appeals. He had recused himself from the board for the hearing, and was present on behalf of his clients, the applicants. Although he "was not compensated for his appearance at the ZBA hearing" (quoting from the Findings of Fact portion of the Disposition Agreement signed by Vallianos and the Ethics Commission), he helped present the plans and establish the facts of the case. He did not make legal arguments. This participation violated Section 17 of Chapter 268A of the Massachusetts General Laws, which prohibits any special municipal employee (defined as an unpaid employee of a town with population under 10,000) from "acting as attorney for anyone other than the municipality in relation to a particular matter in which the town has a direct and substantial interest" (quoting Conclusions of Law in the Disposition Agreement). Bringing the case to closure also cost Peter a $1,250 civil penalty.

There it is. The law, indeed, was breached; an agreement was signed, a fine was assessed and paid.

Dean Amidon, Vice-Chair of the ZBA, had also recused himself from the case, because he is an abutter to the applicant. It fell to me to chair the hearing. Dean was present, and spoke as a neighbor in favor of granting the permit. Fred Chapman and Gerry Shapiro, both Planning Board members, spoke against granting the permit. Peter and the applicants were the only others to speak during the public input portion of the hearing. Although the written submission of the Planning Board to the ZBA regarding the application included the statement, "it should be noted that the planned addition greatly exceeds the 25% increase of habitable square footage allowable under the special permit procedure," the Planning Board did not recommend denial of the special permit. The extent of increase in habitable square footage is a point of law that has come up repeatedly in ZBA hearings over a period of years, during which a significant rewriting of Monterey's zoning bylaw occurred. The rewrite addressed case law precedents which limit the power of zoning over a person's right to add to a dwelling in nonconforming circumstances. (See *Monterey News* article titled "House Rules" in the September 2000 issue.) As the bylaw is presently written, a nonconforming structure, or a structure on a nonconforming lot, may be legally increased by more than 25% in certain situations. Several such cases have been heard and allowed. Although ZBA rulings have consistently upheld present local law (in my own opinion), confusion and differing opinions over the issue persist, even among ZBA members. Concluding this July 2000 hearing, the ZBA voted unanimously to grant the special permit, allowing an increase of more than 25%. No appeal of this ruling was filed subsequently.

I learned of the state inquiry when someone from the Ethics Commission phoned me last spring, nine months or so after the hearing, to quiz me on my role and Peter's. The caller interrupted a normal working day to ask if I had been "intimidated" by Peter's presence at the hearing, or whether he had influenced my vote. It took me a while to remember any details of the case, and another while for my alarm, that perhaps I was being called on the carpet for my own conduct as chair of the hearing, to subside. Then all that was left was to convey to this



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unknown person in Boston, in the course of a twenty-minute phone call, the absurdity of his loaded question.

Did Peter Vallianos intimidate me? Let me think a minute. I have known Peter for decades, played softball with him on long-ago Sundays and basketball with his son last year, sat with him representing me at bank closings, watched kibitzing as he pulled a tape measure to assess my property, joined him on the local land trust in years past, and served three terms on the ZBA of which he was for years the lively, relaxed, informed, and fair chairperson, with whom I often concur on points of law—but sometimes not. Let me be sure I understand the question: Did my friend and neighbor, my fellow townsperson of like disposition in so many matters, did Peter intimidate me, influence my vote? Um, no. Or maybe: Yeah, so what? My mind went all over the map, but I did my best on the phone. I didn't hang up, even though the caller seemed to inhabit a world as far from mine as that of some telemarketer. It was a lousy question to hear, a sort of violation of its own. It had never occurred to me that an ethical lapse was unfolding that evening as I sorted once again through the pesky legal issues surrounding a couple's plan for an addition to their house.

Discussion of the episode with a number of people around town elicits responses that range from So what? to outrage. Some are outraged by Peter's conduct, and others are outraged by the anonymous petition to remote legal authority. No one who knows how the matter came before the Ethics Commission will say, but I am certain that the Commission did not root out this injustice on its own, working from Boston to rid the Bay State of corruption and intrigue. I have asked the question of townspeople and Commission members alike. The Commission must know, and must not say; someone here must know, but no one is willing to say. One might hope that whoever cared enough to notify the Commission of this legal conflict of interest would also be satisfied with the outcome of his or her action. When outrage is redressed, why not claim victory? Maybe the motivating impulse was less than outrage, and the result more than someone bargained for. It's kind of a nasty matter. Most agree on that. Regrettable.

My own outrage, which flared up and soon settled into a familiar simmer, was focused on the secrecy, and the extreme consequences of an action that was at worst careless, but by no account calculated or vindictive. If this was an ethical lapse, it was technical, and it violated only theoretical fairness. No Montereyan was harmed by the legal addition built as a result of this hearing. No neighbor took offense. No challenge to the ruling was even raised, much less upheld. Voracious developers did not wait on this case, cheer the ruling, and immediately stack the building inspector's desk with their plans for Levittown on the Lake. Indeed, the Appeals Board has not met for a hearing on a nonconforming addition since this special permit was granted. A quiet year, except for the hurricane warning.

Some whose outrage focused on the conflict of interest speak in hushed tones about ethics and the law, invoke ringing American themes of democracy, fair play, the rule of law. I take this talk with a fistful of salt. It is emotional boilerplate that only obscures the real consequences of reactionary secrecy. A local conversation or letter could have addressed and settled this matter. Going to the state called in big guns, indifferent legal power, and took advantage of the chance to hide. When we allow our town to be run like this, we should not be surprised that hardworking clear thinkers, like Peter Vallianos, are reluctant or completely unwilling to become local officeholders. That harms democracy, right here at home where they say it starts.

Maybe Peter decided that a thousand bucks plus, and a document that no one will read were a reasonable price for ending tortured conversations with Boston and getting off the board at last. For my part, if I had known then what I know now, I would have used my chairperson power to send him home that night, thereby saving him for more years of service, which I bet he would have given.

— Peter Murkett

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CET to Provide Waste Reduction Assistance to Rural Communities

The Center for Ecological Technology (CET) has received a $99,000 grant from the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Utilities Service to focus on waste reduction and reducing the quantity of toxic products in the rural communities of western Massachusetts. CET will provide a range of services to educate residents about less toxic alternatives to common hazardous products. CET staff will focus on educating parents and adults who work with young children about reducing the use of common hazardous products in the home. Children are especially vulnerable to negative health impacts linked to many common household products, and by switching to less hazardous products, the health and environmental impacts associated with their use and disposal are lessened. CET will also partner with the South Berkshire Chamber of Commerce and the Southern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District to help south Berkshire businesses reduce waste.

"Western Massachusetts continues to lead the state and nation in its commitment to recycling and environmental protection," said U.S. Representative John W. Olver. "Through CET's innovative work and ability to build partnerships, we learn about the implications of the products we use and healthier and more cost effective alternatives. CET is doing great work and I will continue my efforts to secure federal resources for their efforts."

The USDA program objective is to help towns with fewer than 10,000 residents divert waste from landfills and combustion facilities through waste reduction, reuse, and recycling. The program also provides assistance to reduce the toxicity of the waste generated by rural communities. The USDA also provides assistance to rural business development, provides access to safe housing and helps expand community facilities, such as town halls and public safety complexes. With more than $64 million in fiscal year 2001 funding in the State of Massachusetts, USDA Rural Utilities Service is providing a better quality of life for the rural communities of Massachusetts.

Services available through CET's USDA program include:

- Presentations for professional associations and child-care and health care providers about the risks from exposure to toxic products, making informed decisions, choosing safer alternatives, and proper disposal options, including local collection opportunities.
- Educational activities for child-care, nursery and preschool staff, parents, and children on the health and environmental impacts of common products, safer alternatives and proper disposal options.
- Technical assistance for child-care and cleaning service staff, including assessment of products and practices and help in selecting less hazardous alternatives.
- Mercury awareness and mercury collection, including staff training for mercury fever thermometer exchanges.
- Focused attention on the waste management issues of businesses in the south Berkshires to identify strategies that will help save money and reduce waste.
- Public education about waste reduction at community events.

CET has already scheduled presentations for the staff and parents of the Richmond Pre-School, for the staff of the Farmington River Regional Pre-School and Kindergarten, for parents involved in the South Berkshire Family Network, and for the Young Parent's Project. Also in place is a mercury fever thermometer exchange for Lee residents with University of Massachusetts RN/BS nursing students.

For more information, contact Joy Kirschenbaum at CET at (413) 445-4556, 1-800-238-1221 or joyk@cetonline.org.

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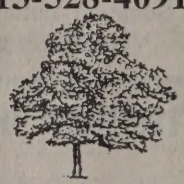

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Cody Rosenthal of Monterey competing in USASA Nationals at Mammoth Mountain, California, March 2001

Cody Rosenthal Selected to National Snowboard Team

Cody Rosenthal of Monterey, a junior at Stratton Mountain School in Stratton, Vermont, continues to rip it up on the snowboard circuit. As a result of his first place finish for the season in halfpipe in the Southern Vermont Snowboard Series, and a bronze medal in halfpipe at the USASA Nationals, Cody has been selected to compete in halfpipe as a member of the United States Junior National Snowboard Team. At the Junior National Team training camp in Steamboat, Colorado, in January, he will compete for the right to represent the United States in international competition next spring.

Cody will compete in halfpipe and big air on the professional level this season, with the finest riders in the world. He is sponsored by Atlantis Snowboards and is a member of the Atlantis team.

The season will begin with the Vans Triple Crown competition at Breckenridge, Colorado, Dec. 6–9. Then Cody will compete in two events considered the Olympic trials for the Utah games: the U.S. Grand Prix at Mammoth, California, Dec. 12–16, and the U.S. Grand Prix at Mt. Bachelor, Oregon, Jan. 4–6.

Stratton Mountain School is a college preparatory school combining rigorous academics with world-class ski and cross country ski racing, snowboard racing, and freestyle programs. Stratton, whose graduates go on to many colleges, has produced 21 Olympians and 75 national team members. During the competition season, Cody will continue to carry a full course load of academics, including pre calculus, chemistry, English, history, and economics.

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Renewable Energy Forum on December 4

The Berkshire Renewable Energy Collaborative will host a forum on "Renewable Energy: Choices for Our Environment" on Tuesday, December 4, 2001, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Cranwell Resort and Conference Center in Lenox. Exhibits of conservation and renewable technologies including solar, wind, biomass, and small hydro will be on display during a speaker's reception beginning at 6 p.m. The forum is free and open to the public.

"Renewable Energy: Choices for Our Environment" is a unique opportunity to learn about our national energy policy and implications for local actions. The keynote speaker, Kevin Knobloch, Executive Director of the Union of Concerned Scientists, will discuss the connections between current energy use and climate change. He will also provide an update on the status of the National Energy Plan and its role in promoting energy conservation and renewable energy technologies.

Following Mr. Knobloch's presentation, the Center for Ecological Technology (CET) and members of the Collaborative will moderate a discussion with the audience about the local implications of our national and state policies. They will explore ways that Berkshire residents, businesses, organizations and institutions can increase access to renewable energy.

For more information visit CET's website: www.cetonline.org/Events/events.htm or call 413-445-4556.

South Berkshire Family Network December News

This is a partial listing of Family Network events. Please call (413) 528-0721 for more information. All events are held at the Family Center, 940 South Main Street, Great Barrington unless otherwise noted. Families are requested to register for all events and playgroups. In case of bad weather, please call the Family Center to learn if the event has been cancelled.

December 3, 10, 17, Mondays: Holiday Crafts for 3 and 4 year old children, led by Jessica Redman. 10:30 a.m.–12 noon.

December 3, 10, 17, Mondays 10:30 a.m.: Kindermusic classes, Lenox Community Center, For more information, please contact Karen Kearney, 243-6144.

December 3, 10, 17, Mondays, Parent-infant play group, 12:30 p.m.–2 p.m. December 3, Dindy Anderson, First Steps Coordinator will discuss child development during the first year; December 16, Gail Puntin, LICSW, Barrington OB-GYN, will discuss postpartum issues.

December 5, Wednesday, Mothers of Multiples Night Out, 6 p.m. Call Missy, 229-3557.

December 7, 14, 21, Fridays, Kindermusic classes, Lenox Community Center, 10:30 a.m. For more information, contact Karen Kearney, 243-6144,

December 10, Monday, Parents' Discussion Group, " Kids and Money" Light supper and child care. 5:30-7:30 p.m.

December 11, Tuesday, Wonder of Wheels, an interactive program about animals, insects, reptiles, and birds, led by Judy Witzke. A limit of 15 children can attend. It is most appropriate for 2,3 4, year olds, who understand gentle touch. First Congregational Church, Fellowship Hall, Lee, 10 a.m.

December 11, Tuesday, Moms With More group, led by Gail Puntin, LICSW, Barrington OBGYN, at Family Center. Please call Gail at 528-1470 to register. Child care is provided. 10 a.m.–12 noon.

December 15, Saturday, Father-child playgroup. Mothers are invited. 10:30 a.m.-12 noon.

December 17, Monday, Stepfamilies group, Russell House, 7 p.m.

December 18, Tuesday, Spanish Story Time, Hear story in Spanish, do an activity and share a snack. 10 a.m.

December 19, Wednesday, Mother Baby Exercise and Baby Massage, led by Vicky Guy, LPTA from Fairview Hospital. Family Center, 1 p.m.

December 21, Friday, Story Time, Otis Family Center, lower level of Town Hall, 10:30 a.m.

December 22, Saturday, Toddler playgroup, requested by families who have graduated from the parent infant playgroup. 9:30–10:30 a.m.

December 24, Monday, Family Center will be open from 9 a.m.–12 noon.

December 25, Tuesday, Family Cen-

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Elizabeth Goodman, Pastor

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528-5850

ter will be closed for the holiday.

December 26, 27, 28, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: Drop in time at the Family Center, Great Barrington, 10 a.m.–12 noon.

December 31, Monday, Family Center open 9 a.m.–12 noon.

December 31, Monday, Family Center New Year's Party held at St. Peter's Center, East Street, Great Barrington. Pot luck supper, child activities, entertainment. Cosponsored by SBYMCA. 5:30–8:30 p.m.

Family Network News

—Citizen's Energy Oil Heat Program can help with a delivery of half price heating oil. Please call 1- 877-563-4645 for more information.

KID'S CLUBS: The Family Network parents have worked with area churches and social services to initiate two kid's clubs, an occasional care drop-off time on two days a week. The Y Kid's Club is held every Tuesday from 9:15-11:45 a.m. at the Southern Berkshire YMCA space at St. James' Church in Great Barrington. Please call Marta at 528-9622 for more information. The Kid's Club in Sheffield meets on Thursdays from 9 a.m.–12 noon at the Old Parish Church. For more information, please call Sally at 229-0392. These programs help to answer a need for short-time child care for parents who have appointments or need to shop without children. We thank everyone who helped to make these two programs possible.

Peter S. Vallianos
Attorney at Law
528-0055

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***

I will meet with you at your home in Monterey.

Senator Says

Downsizing the Pike's Signs

In a move that I hope will preserve the aesthetic and natural character of the Massachusetts Turnpike and its surrounding towns, I recently filed legislation that would restrict the height and size of signs at Turnpike plazas.

If you have traveled on the MassPike in recent months, you have no doubt seen these massive vendor signs, some of which tower ninety feet in height. The signs are eyesores. They are disruptive to the scenic vistas of many towns that border the Turnpike. Similarly, hikers have reported that the signs are visible along portions of the Appalachian Trail.

The legislation I filed has twenty cosponsors from the Senate and House of Representatives. The bill would require the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority to replace the signs along the entire highway with signs that are no taller than thirty feet from the top of the sign to the ground, and no more than eighty square feet in area, excluding supports.

The smaller signs that had been used for years on the MassPike were more than adequate to advertise the services available at rest stops. The new signs, in some cases, are three times the size of the old signs, which clearly compromises the aesthetic nature of the Turnpike. Limiting their size and height will ensure that the public convenience continues to be served and will help towns along the Turnpike to protect their rural character.

Fifty years ago, transportation and urban planners designed an interstate highway system that would be both efficient and beautiful. Robert Moses in New York, William Callahan in Massachusetts, and others around the country envisioned a highway system, including the MassPike, that would be free from commercial clutter. This bill attempts to protect our highway system from the unsightly intrusions that have recently appeared on the Turnpike landscape.

As part of the National Highway System, the Turnpike is a federal-aid highway. Under federal regulations, states are directed to improve areas adjacent to the system by controlling outdoor advertising signs. Both federal law and federal transportation regulations promote the preservation of natural beauty along the nation's highways. Title 23, section 752.2 of the Code of Federal Regulations states, "Highway aesthetics is a most important consideration in the Federal-aid highway program. Highways must not only blend in with our natural, social and cultural environment, but also provide pleasure and satisfaction in their use."

A contract that the Turnpike Authority signed with McDonald's and Tosco, which operates the Exxon stations, does increase the revenues the Commonwealth receives from the vendors, from about $6 million to $14 million, but the Turnpike Authority is not receiving any additional revenue for allowing the signs to be taller.

As always, please feel free to contact my district office in Pittsfield at (413) 442-6810 with any questions.

— Senator Andrea F. Nuciforo, Jr.

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George Emmons

Bidwell House

Volunteers and Bidwell House Board members assembled on Sunday, November 11, and put their heads together to activate the preliminary restoration of the grounds as designed and planted by founding members Jack Hargis and David Brush. After several focused hours of heavy labor, cutting with power saws, clearing brush, stacking future burn piles, as well as some fine-tuning and pruning of overgrown plantings, to be thinned out and preserved, some gratification came into view with the vastly improved vista in the fields below the old manse.

Participants included the following, from left to right in the photo; Jan Emmons, organizer, Sam Corbin, volunteer; Richard Greene, Board member; Mark Roberts, volunteer and neighbor; Gary Ives, volunteer; Diane Maygur, volunteer; Kathryn Roberts, Board member; Paula Leuchs Moats, great-great-great-granddaughter of the first Reverend Bidwell.

To reward their efforts, hot black bean soup and Bloody Marys were served and enjoyed by all, including Bill Brockman and myself; although not shown in the picture, we looked just as happy as anyone else. Perhaps the best news of all had already come the day before in the report of the grounds committee, a plan to establish a budget and engage professional design, implementation, and maintenance of the gardens, including the flower, vegetable, and herb gardens, as soon as a final decision is made about how these will relate to each other and to the house itself.

— George Emmons

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From the Meetinghouse

Todd was trying to improve his hand-eye coordination for his left side, so, whenever I saw him that summer, he had a tennis ball that he was constantly dribbling with his left hand—bouncing and catching. It drove some people crazy—bouncing and catching—but I liked it. I admired it. What a thing to decide to do, and then actually to do it!

Todd played water polo for the high school junior varsity team. He, like me, had just completed his freshman year, and during the following year he wanted to make it onto varsity. He was sure that being able to catch and throw with both hands would increase his chances of making the cut. So his job for the summer, he had decided, was to always have that tennis ball in his left hand—bouncing and catching.

My job paid only slightly better. I was the admissions office summer receptionist and tour guide. It was the slow season for prep school tours. Most people like to see a school in action before they decide to send their children there. So Mrs. Toole, the full-time receptionist, always took the summer off. Each year a day student was offered the job. That summer, it was mine.

Mostly it involved sitting behind an antique desk in the parlor of one of the oldest buildings in town that the academy had somehow acquired and transformed into its admissions office. I had to answer occasional telephone calls, prepare mailings, and lead tours, usually three or four times a week. Todd would often follow along, bouncing and catching.

It wasn't as if he needed a tour himself. He had grown up on campus. He was a "fac brat," the child of a faculty member. So it wasn't as if he needed a tour himself. He just needed something to do, somewhere to go, walking, so he could continue his bouncing and catching. Plus, we were friends, two day students at a boarding school where there was little to do during the summertime, when there were only a few people from the school year still hanging around.

So Todd would often follow along—bouncing and catching—through the library, through the academy building,

through the science building, through the gym, his ball reacting to pavement, marble, slate, concrete, wood as he was more and more able to accommodate them all, bouncing and catching, bouncing and catching . . .

The cruelest people I have ever known I met in high school. This is not unusual, I think. It can be a cruel time of life, a time when you don't even recognize your own image in the mirror from one day to the next, let alone trying to recognize who your friends are, whom you can trust, who might serve as an anchor when everything else is free-floating, at times overwhelming to the point of drowning.

It was certainly a cruel time to me, as I found myself in a world populated almost entirely by adolescents, where, while there were plenty of authority figures, there were few parents, few families, no families of faith, little sense of community or belonging—a world where, while there was academic rigor and intellectual stimulation, and a stunning amount of money, there seemed precious little love to go round.

On the first day of the first year, the principal gathered the freshman class together in the assembly hall and said, "Look to your right and to your left. Two of the three of you won't make it to graduation." And it was true. Of the 125 students who entered as freshman, only around 50 graduated. The others were either kicked out for drinking, for drug use, for cheating, for hazing, or flunked out or dropped out—so we said as if there was no dignity in deciding not to stay. One even committed suicide.

Of the ones who stayed—both Todd and I were among them—many did so with a vengeance. And my memories of Todd following that summer are not nearly so good as during those simple, pleasant days when we were the only two people in our little world.

Now that our nation has joined deliberately in making war, I have found myself often thinking of my once friend Todd. After high school Todd enrolled at the Naval Academy in Annapolis. Later he served as a naval officer, and most recently has become a SEAL, a member of the Sea, Air and Land Special Operations Force of the Navy, perhaps the most elite group in the American military. He is stationed in San Diego, but is seldom there. Once I bumped into his mother back home and I asked about Todd. She didn't know where in the world he might be because she couldn't know. It was classified information.

Yes, lately, I have found myself thinking of him often, bouncing and catching, now that he is a trained assassin, perhaps spending these days in Afghanistan, searching caves for Osama bin Laden, now that I am a minister, spending these days in my new church office, overlooking a most plain and beautiful sanctuary, overlooking the empty cross on the altar, overlooking the quiet town of Monterey, resisting with everything I am the idea of joining in on this war between people—fellow creatures of God's making—that has been ongoing in some form or another since history can remember: resisting with all the power of my faith the constant presence of cruelty in our world, hoping against hope that the brothers-in-arms on all sides of the battle lines now drawn, always drawn, might someday become one community in peace.

And I wonder, was that summer an illusion? Were those days of wandering around an empty campus together, bouncing and catching, a pleasantry that I made up, a whitewashing of my own history? It seems like wishful thinking that something so simple could ever have come true, especially now that our once simple lives in America, spent pursuing happiness, have suddenly become so horribly complex, so horribly confusing.

At church, we have been in the midst of Pentecost, the season that witnesses to Jesus' journey toward Jerusalem. The Lectionary readings guide us through those days when time had drawn near for him to be taken up, when he had set his face to go to Jerusalem, saying to the disciples, "Let these words sink into your ears: the Son of Man is going to be betrayed into human hands." Yet, with these words Jesus embarks not on a straight path ending at the place of the skull under a death-darkened sky, but on a journey of wandering and teaching, of visiting friends, relaxing as a guest in people's homes, and telling simple stories that illustrate the kingdom of God. Just as things are about to get horribly complex for Jesus, horribly confusing—one friend betraying him, the rest abandoning him, God forsaking him, all leaving him to die alone—he continues to testify to the simple gifts that are of God, not illusions but revelations of ultimate reality, conquering fear, conquering forsakenness, conquering even death.

So here is my resolve: in the light of the simple revelations offered by Jesus is how I remember Todd, not as a warrior, sure of his mission, while I am a new minister, sure of mine, both of us on opposite sides of battle lines, but as a boy with a ball, bouncing and catching, walking with me through pleasant summer days.

And here is my hope: that we might all be open to seeing the revelation of God's abiding love for the world in the simplest gifts of life, not as illusions of what we wish were true, but as ultimate reality where truth makes its home.

— Elizabeth Goodman

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in growing
carry my heart to the Sun
and, in such a sense.
in a trembling of leaves
in bliss and at a height
all shall be One.

— A. O. Howell

Reminiscing

Joys this generation misses
And perhaps will never know
Are the cheery sounds of sleigh bells
Ringing out across the snow,
The neighbors in for Christmas,
Red candles on the tree
Decked out with strings of popcorn...
A pretty sight to see!
Gilded English walnut shells
And chains of paper rings,
Little cut out angels
And other home-made things.
The true meaning of Christmas
Was with us way back then.
In dreams I go back to those good old days
And live them over again.

— Eleanor Kimberley

why nights are for movies

for Pauline 9/01

you come to me glowin' gibbous
in the cricket dark o' corn shuckin'
the garden's in a real sad mood
the house is in a badder mood
everythin' is dry or dryer
'though gloried in the mornin' dew
there ain't been no rain since it rained
an' that was before the last war
seems killin' is as popular
(an' thats a cruel joke) as plantin'
how much do I want from this thing?
why should I expect anythin'?
I am a compulsive planter
mad lover of the leaf an' bloom
every season, hah! every day
I learn a new trick or reason
why brightness an' blues rule the world
why nights are for movies an' girl
after the cookin's been cooked, yum
you turn yer pots over an' drum
rhythm's that writhin' god o' life
rhyme an' song his favorite wives
Oh writhin' one, help with my song
o' belongin' an' the four winds
moisturize! yeah, wet vibe the soil
for the dead an' freshly fallin'!

— R. Zukowski

Cusp

Soon everything will be covered with snow:
the toy football and the lawnmower
left outside when inertia set in.
Time to clip the fingernails again.
Like a worm, my soul burrows,
a fierce adversary,
on the side of the bulbs.

A cat crosses the gravel with its shadow.
It walks into the shadow of a tree.
It loses its shadow, then emerges from
the shadow of the tree.
The cat now has its shadow back.

Lie down with me, my love.
The tendency is toward tomorrow,
all strain that way,
but you, I, sand and sea,
we can lie here.

Soon it may fall.
The Lilliputians are winning.
The struggling giant
is staked to the ground.

The alfalfa is still so green.
It grows against the tan corn.
The hills shrug their beauty off,
rivaled constantly by the sky,

but there are too many crows.
Their calls rival the geese calls,
leaving in the early haze.
The crows seem here to stay.
That's what their calls seem to say.

— Peter Shepley

Jonah's Meteors

Stars fell through the coils of the dragon,
chased the dog and his hunter,
flared across the face of the Great Immensity,
each risking its own inexorable
path of agreement
with One Indelible Will.

When his mind returned
to the small (the hills;
voices of migrating geese;
the cold support
of clear night air on his skin;
the sound of his owm steps,
one, another, again, again;
the mirror of it all in the water)
he was already well
along his inevitable trajectory,
more than halfway to Nineveh.

— MaryKate Jordan

Haiku

The full moon
fell in the barrel
of rainwater.

— Ann M. LaVallée

A Note to Myself

Every day
in every way
Feast on giving thanks.

— Ann M. LaVallée

Ticks and Reds

"Good morning, class. Turn to page 26 in your textbooks and we'll continue our study of communism. Why is it so important that we learn about communism?

The hands were waving. We knew the answer to this one because our teacher, Miss Bergeron, had drilled us every day, like a citizen militia.

"Ooh, ooh!" said the waving hands. This was central Connecticut, high school, mid-1960s. You could just about see the flags in the hands.

Miss Bergeron called on a lucky student.

"We need to know all about communism," said the scholar, "so we can recognize it and stamp it out!"

"Thank you, Kathy."

Most of the girls in my class at that time were named Kathy. They were cheerleaders, honors students, spelling bee winners, and they went steady. They would be able to spot a communist a mile away. I used to wonder what they would do with a Red if they found one. Citizen's arrest? Lynch mob? Blacklist?

The main communist in our young lives was Nikita Kruschev. Him we could always spot because he had a shoe in his hand for banging on the table and punctuating the thing he always said which was, "We will bury you."

Obviously young communists would know the plan if they found one of *us*: burial. I could just hear their teachers. "What will you do with a capitalist if you find one?"

"Ooh, ooh! Bury it!"

I could not picture the young communist Katyas of Russia burying me. I would be friendly. I would be interesting to them and they would never dream of putting me in a hole, no matter what their teachers said. I did not believe the Kathys in my class could do damage to a communist, either. I knew them to be squeamish and reluctant to smear their makeup or to take off their nylons in gym class.

We do not worry so much about communism these days, but of course there are always new dangers cropping up to keep us perky. I do think a certain amount of sensible vigilance is necessary, especially in these troubled times. But I think Miss Bergeron would back me up when I say it's not a good idea to bury the enemy before you've had a good look. Of course there is always the possibility that if you get too good a look, you'll lose your burying urge.

Take for example my recent experience with a dog tick. Ticks have passed through my hands many times, and as this part of the globe warms up I find more and more ticks come my way. Years ago I had to go to Rhode Island to find a tick. More recently I could get some on my dog as nearby as Great Barrington. Now not only do I have them right at home, I also have the new consciousness of tick-borne diseases to keep me on my toes and spooked. Nevertheless I try to keep the tick separate from the bacterium, at least in my own mind. I try to see the tick as a tick: a small eight-legged creature (or six-legged if it is a larva), a member of the order Acarina—along with the mites and chiggers. Ticks, mites, chiggers, spiders, and scorpions are different from insects in that the adults do not have six legs. They have no antennae and their eyes are "simple" as opposed to "complex." Complex eyes, you will remember from distant biology class and more recent horror movies, are made of lots of little jewellike eyes all fastened together, resulting (we are to believe) in many images being transmitted to the insect brain all at once. It's hard to imagine a brain at all in an insect, let alone one of a size necessary to process so many images and make sense of them. Anyway, ticks have simple eyes, more like us.

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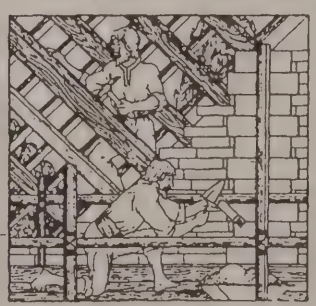

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Otherwise they are not so much like us: they are parasites. I had a professor named Ivan Pratt, an old-school gent who wore a suit and tie to class even in Oregon in 1971. He taught a graduate course in parasitology and told us proudly that parasitism really was the perfect life-style. Dr. Pratt took us through the hookworms and roundworms, tapeworms and liver flukes. We went home at night with our eyes popped full of visions of these Internal Life Forms. We had the impression Dr. Pratt had thought them all up, patented them maybe, each more marvelous than the last. Some had several different hosts, intricate requirements, assurances that they would not overtax their hosts and lose their sustenance.

"A good parasite," Dr. Pratt beamed, "does not kill the host."

I took a good parasite off our dog Ruby the other day. It was a pea-sized female dog tick, full of Thanksgiving dog. Only with my reading glasses could I be sure she was all there, all eight legs and her sharp little recurved mouthparts. She was so distended, her legs so tiny and waving exhaustedly, that I was amazed to notice that from lying upside down on the rug she had somehow flipped over and was taking off at a rapid crawl. I hauled her back, for science, and put her on her back again. The legs waved, and I could swear she shifted her shoulders and rolled a little to the south. One foot found a bit of rug fiber and over she went!

I put her far from rug fibers, on her back on the wooden floor, and she shifted vigorously this way and that. First she rolled south, then north, and then—east! She actually started a roll that might have taken her heels over head, her giant saclike abdomen sticking straight up. But gravity proved too much for her and she fell back just short of righting herself. I picked her up and ran around showing her off to the family. She kept trying to roll over and I knew I was cheating by keeping her on smooth flat surfaces, the likes of which no tick in the wild will ever experience. The woods around here are full of fibers and ruglike opportunities for tick footholds. You are right, Dr. Pratt, she was perfect for what she would normally encounter.

Having admired and exploited this tick, I could not turn around and bury her. She had opened my eyes to tick contortions I never would have believed possible. After this I was going to execute her? No. I decided to pretend she had fallen off Ruby in the natural course of events and transported her to a place which was not close to my house but where she might expect to find another meal sometime in the next two years. She can make it for two years between meals.

I spared that tick. A few minutes with her and I was way too involved and admiring to snuff her out. I couldn't see what would really be gained. She has 4,999 litter mates out there somewhere so on the scale of things she might as well proceed toward her destiny, which was not going to be me.

This is the way I see my Kathys and the Reds, too. It's one thing to read the textbook and get called on by the teacher when you think you know the answer. It's quite another to pick up the shovel and do the burying. Even a tick will never kill its host, unless of course it is carrying some awful disease. This certainly would never be the case with the Kathys.

— Bonner J. McAllester

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Owls at Winter Solstice

G. B. Emmons

Snowy owl and eel

For anyone interested in bird-watching, it is curious that the cover illustrations for J. K. Rowling's best-selling novels for children (ages 10 and older) about Harry Potter and a school for witchcraft have snowy owls as well as captions of the movie. Perhaps this owl in particular, classified as *Nyctea scandiaca* (Latin name that almost rhymes with sorcerer), has an aura of wizardry about it, with its round mantled white face and the expression of mystery in the unblinking, all-knowing stare of its piercing almond-shaped golden eyes. And if there is any rhyme or reason to its unpredictable migratory appearance in these parts, as early as the winter solstice, it defies any logical explanation by ornithologists.

The snowy owl, standing several feet higher than the top of a fence post at the edge of a cow pasture of Gould Farm, is slightly larger than a great horned owl, and somehow finds its way here from circumpolar regions, supposedly when food there, such as lemmings, is going to be scarce, but this theory is not exactly etched in stone either. And just to defy logic, some have been seen sitting for hours on end on the peaks of buildings in the center of Pittsfield. Yet the only one I have seen was along the winter Atlantic coastline. Both the owl and I were duck hunting, when what I thought at first was a seagull tried to fly off with one of my decoys. Then I realized it had a five foot wingspan and left six inch talon marks on the corrugated back of my decoy.

MONTEREY
A LOCAL HISTORY

Edited by Peter Murkett, Ian Jenkins, & Kim Hines

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A snowy owl is able to catch and kill a Canada goose and will frequent tidal areas to scavenge what washes up on the beach. Also a very adept fisherman, it is able to snatch from an opening in the ice what might be swimming just under the surface. The exposed edges of Lake Garfield from the drawdown might be a good place to see this rare visitor. The summer cottages are boarded up, the water pipes drained, and it gets as quiet as a ghost town along the shoreline, which is a perfect setting much to the owl's liking. Just look for this phantom flier, as white as the driven snow, larger than a gull, and able to see to hunt both in daylight or in darkness, with intermittent wingbeats and a sense of predatory purpose in going about its business.

On the other end of the spectrum of various owls here is the very smallest, the northern saw-whet owl, standing barely seven inches tall. Unlike the much larger barred owl, which maintains a very high vocal profile from Chestnut Hill that sounds like "who cooks for you," the saw-whet is normally very withdrawn, although tame enough to be held in one hand; its hoot sounds like the sharpening of a saw—and hardly anyone around here knows what that sounds like anymore. It is most likely to be seen about one month after the winter solstice, in twilight, that fleeting time between sunset and nightfall, which is the shortest of the year, about an hour and a half altogether of not very good visibility, unless you are an owl.

Several years ago, on the dead limb of a giant oak tree in a meadow just below Lowland Farm, Barbara Tryon and I sighted what we thought might be a great horned owl. This is our largest species of so-called eared owls, and this characteristic is very prominent for such a large bird. There are several smaller species of long- and short-eared owls, but there is no mistaking this owl, if only by its huge size and fierce demeanor. Amazingly enough, before winter is even half over, pairs of great horned owls will be ready to mate, while there is still snow on the ground. While fur-bearing mammals spend the long nights hidden away in hollow trees, leafy culverts, burrows, and dens, curled up in a ball for warmth like human hands in a muff, many in hibernation, this is the season of silent wings, coasting down the nocturnal realm of their predatory domain. And if you crack your window before going to bed in Monterey, just before you fall asleep for a long winter's nap, you may hear that owls are out there. After the last full moon of January, they will be building their nest for the next season.

"Merry Christmas to all
And to all a good night."

— George Emmons

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National Trust Supports Sandisfield Arts Center

The Sandisfield Arts & Restoration Committee has been awarded a $2500 matching grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Mildred Jones Keefe Preservation Services Fund for Massachusetts. The grant will be used to fund architect's fees in association with the creation of a master plan for the restoration of the historic arts center building. Originally a Baptist meetinghouse built in 1839, and later the only known rural orthodox synagogue on record in the state of Massachusetts, the building is now in its third life as a community arts center. The Sandisfield Arts Center was among several grant recipients selected in a competitive application process from applicants across New England, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.

In announcing the grant, National Trust Northeast Regional Office Director Wendy Nicholas said, "With these start-up dollars, Sandisfield, Massachusetts joins the hundreds of other communities across the country actively ensuring that America's architectural and cultural heritage is preserved."

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, chartered by Congress in 1949, is a nonprofit organization with more than 270,000 members. The Sandisfield Arts & Restoration Committee is a nonprofit organization established in 1995 to save the historic building and hold cultural programming. A new roof and belfry were completed in 2000. The foundation is the next restoration project scheduled for spring 2002.

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The Thread of the Story:
A Pocket Full of Gratitude

Each year, the Embroiderers' Guild of America offers a stitchery challenge. Any member intrigued by that year's theme signs up in January, and delivers the finished work on or before September 1. The theme for 2001 was "Treasures." It was, I reassured myself as I signed up, an opportunity.

"And the Chinese character for opportunity," some wry part of my mind muttered, "can also be translated as crisis." I marched that part of my psyche back to its room and suggested it write its memoirs, or do something else constructive, but to stop nagging me.

By March I'd discovered several projects which, once underway, definitely weren't magical. Then I remembered that fabulous fashion accessory from the eighteenth century, the pocket. What better focus for treasure than a pocket to hold it in? And the eighteenth century is, itself, quite a treasure. With those "Ahas!" in place, I waited for more inspiration.

And waited. April, May, June. Early in July we went to visit friends who live Down East, on the coast in Maine. We'd always visited in June before, and I was surprised to see the rugosa rose bushes still in bloom on the edges of the rocky beaches. I wished I'd brought muslin from home, so that I could capture these treasures for the front of my pocket.

It's possible to embellish fabric with many kinds of flowers, and roses transfer their colors particularly well. One simply takes tools in hand—flowers, fabric, hammer—and applies them to each other as needed on a flat surface padded with newspaper. Soon, an image of the flower is transferred to the fabric. But I didn't have any muslin, and we were miles from a fabric store and had dedicated the week to simple relaxation. No rush, no fuss, no phone, no errands. So I surrendered my fantasy.

The next day, on our way to a restaurant for lunch, a group of us got lost and turned around in a large gravel parking lot. From the unaccustomed luxury of my spot in the back seat, I glanced idly out the window.

"Stop!" I hollered as calmly as I could.

"I'll be right back," I added over my shoulder, as I dashed into the fabric store whose parking lot we'd entered.

The gratitude that bubbled up as I paid for the muslin became the underlying theme for my challenge stitchery. The pocket was eventually embellished not only with the prints of the roses, but also with prints of pansies, Johnny-jump-ups, and some dill from a bunch we bought for the fresh crabmeat salad we fixed and ate that night for dinner. And I further embellished the prints with stitches. Stem and outline stitches in greens underscored the dill. In raspberry, they defined the roses. Then yellow and saffron French knots surrounded the flowers' green, yellow, and raspberry centers.

The pocket was well underway by the time I got home. All its elements were catalysts for gratitude, so I named it "A Pocket Full of Gratitude." I added appliquéd leaves to the mix with buttonhole stitch. I made a multicolored twisted cord for one of the tie strings; made it as playful and as twenty-first-century as possible. After all, much as I love the eighteenth century, my life is lived in the treasure of the here and now.

I printed the names of a few of the people and things for which I am grateful on little slips of paper, too, then tucked them into the pocket. Then I sent it on its way to Texas for Judgment Day.

The assessment I received in return is another treasure, one which was humbling in its detailed mission to search for, find, and comment on every strength the judge could find in my work. Crisis and opportunity together, it seems, does equal treasure. Something to keep in mind and heart as we look back on 2001.

— MaryKate Jordan

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The News *welcomes letters from readers, but all letters must be signed. We do not print anonymous letters.*

Another Response to the Bombing

To the Editor:

This letter is to answer the letters published by your paper, in the November 2001 issue, by Melissa Hamilton and John Sellew.

I would like to invite both of them to visit lower Manhattan. I live there and will gladly escort them on a tour of "the site." We can now get close to Ground Zero and what they would experience is not like the scenes on TV.

First there is the smell and reality of our own crematorium. There are still many fires burning and the smell of acrid smoke is ever present.

Next we can see a piece of the facade of the North Tower still stuck in the ground surrounded by hills of rubble and the other burnt-out buildings which will be demolished in time.

We can go to see the gaping hole in the American Express building and the broken Winter Garden next to it. If we are lucky, we will see a group of the victims' families walking in and out of the site as they visit their loved ones' grave site.

We can see the many memorials along the way where flowers, candles, tributes, and photos of the dead are placed. If you don't weep at one of these places, you will never weep anywhere.

Later on we can visit some of the firehouses in lower Manhattan and Brooklyn which lost some of the 343 firefighters. To stand outside of these buildings and see the photos and letters from school children all across America will break your heart.

You can see the endless line of dump trucks that take the debris, probably filled with some body parts, to the barges on the Hudson River—24 hours a day and 7 days a week.

After the tour, we can talk about the thousands of children who lost a parent and whose families are trying to put their lives back together.

We can talk about the quality of life here now. Thousands of people are out of work and hundreds of businesses have closed or will close. Our schools are still closed, we live with air filters and vacuums, dust filled with who knows what, police, soldiers, and an overwhelming sense of sadness that permeates every aspect of our lives.

But my neighbors and I are lucky—we are alive. We are willing to stay here and help to rebuild. We owe it to our innocents, American innocents, to rebuild and reclaim what was before. We owe it to those firefighters who ran up 80 flights of stairs to rescue people they never even knew. We owe it to the families of the dead as they try to make sense out of this horror. We owe it to future generations of Americans to preserve our way of life so that Ms. Hamilton's little friend can keep picking flowers and Mr. Sellew can keep encouraging the practice of TM to reduce tension and stress.

As for me, I will follow the paths of Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman. I will support bombing and killing our terrorist enemies wherever they are and if innocents get in the way, as they did in Dresden, Cologne, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki, so be it. I believe that the American people and our freedoms are more important than anyone else's innocents.

So come visit the site and maybe you will see it my way.

— June Grancio

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Eileen Lawlor

Playmates Wanted

To the Editor:

I have a wonderful little dog named Teddy (above). He's a five-month-old cockapoo, newly arrived in Monterey, and he needs community. He is looking for other small and medium-sized dogs to play and/or walk with. He has already made one good friend—Renardo—and they romp around Brewers Pond at least once a week. If there are other people out there with four-footers who need friends, please call me (we live on Hupi Road) and we will try to get together.

— Eileen Lawlor

The State of the Store

To the Editor:

When we first looked for a home here, our Real Estate broker extolled the virtues of the property and the town, and then remarked that the best thing about Monterey was the General Store. It was only after reading Lew Scheffey's recent article that I came to realize the importance of that comment.

New York is where my husband and I work. It is what the IRS regards as our primary residence, and where we spend most of our time. Monterey, however, has become our true home, not our "second" home. It is where our family gathers, where we celebrate holidays and birthdays, where we seek solace after a storm.

Whenever I leave Monterey I am sad. I longingly carry in my mind images of Lake Garfield, forestland, farmland, and the town itself. It's as if in my mind's eye I have my very own Norman Rockwell–style painting, with the General Store at the center, and it brings a smile to my face and warmth to my heart. I love stopping for my mail, then grabbing a Shopper's Guide and milk when we first pull into town. I love going there in the morning and seeing the "Crackle Barrel" guys on the porch. I love hearing my granddaughter ask her grandfather if he will take "me, just me," to the General Store. She is thinking of pink bubble gum on the counter and ice pops in the freezer, and he is relishing the opportunity for "alone" time with her.

As a member of the Monterey community, I now know why the broker made the statement he did. The store is a 200-year-old icon; it is the heartbeat of our town. I am devastated by the thought that it might be endangered, for if that institution were imperiled, the character of our town would change. My response to Lew and Joyce Scheffey, and to Shelley, is to say thank you for keeping the store alive. You have made an investment in our town.

— Jane Salamon

I Don't Get It . . .

Our homes extend beyond the confines of the walls . . .

I'm driving down Gould Road, on my way to the transfer station (dump), when the driver in the car in front of me tosses a cigarette butt into the stream as we cross Rawson Brook. Ouch!! A landslide of thoughts hit me: "Hey buddy, how can you do that! Would you throw that on the floor in your house? Use your ashtray!" It feels like a real violation. I follow the car and it turns into the dump.

I'm now nervous. I want to introduce myself, have some small talk—you know, break the ice—then ask what it was he tossed overboard into the brook. See if he admits to the toss. (The last time I did that

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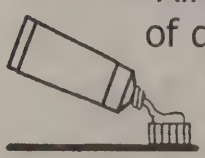

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I got an earful about how it was none of my @*&^ing business.) I watch him for a bit, trying to size him up. Nice car . . . Connecticut plates . . . Monterey dump sticker. He looks at a toy in the recycle pile by the compactor and then wanders over to the old computer pile and finds nothing. He gets very interested in a hedge trimmer.

"Got a cord?" he asks the attendant. "Nope." The trimmer goes back in the pile. It may have worked, we'll never know.

"Excuse me . . . I'm very curious and would like to ask . . ." It's only a loud thought and lands on no one's ears. I can't seem to get up the nerve. All sorts of thoughts in my head . . . I'm answering all my own questions:

"No big deal."

"It is a big deal."

"Why not use the ashtray?"

"Too many candy wrappers stuffed in there. It would start a fire."

"Do you throw your butts on the floor in your house?"

"No way. Walls and carpet change the rules. Can't burn down the house!"

I'm at a loss. I need some help with this one. I am using the cigarette as an example—it could be anything.

Go to the beach and enjoy the beauty of the lake. Smoke a cigarette and throw the butt in the sand, snuff it out with your shoe or leave it burning, and there it stays. Trash the place of beauty you came to enjoy. Other people now have to deal with it. When you're crawling around in the sand with your kids it's kind of like being in an ashtray.

Glynis Oliver

We call this small patch of earth our home. We live here. We have grass and trees, air to breath, and water to drink. It sustains us all. We are here because we love this place. We build a house on this patch of earth and we call it home. But somehow, within the confines of this home there is a completely different set of rules. We wouldn't throw a smoldering cigarette on the floor of our house but we will toss it out the window of our car or throw it on the ground.

What kind of a mind-set allows someone to throw trash out of a car window? What you toss is one thing; that's bad enough. The lack of awareness that allows you to throw it is a much bigger issue. We human beings are so disconnected from our natural environment and completely unaware of how our actions impact our surroundings. Our ignorance and lack of awareness gives rise to a kind of arrogance. These actions may not be malicious, just thoughtless. Too much work to be responsible. Take our man from Connecticut. There was nothing malicious about the toss. The trajectory of the butt out the window was a graceful arc, not an angry gunshot. It was a gorgeous day. The window was down and not a cloud in the sky. Fresh air was plentiful. He had not a care in the world. Just cruising the dump on a Sunday afternoon. He drove away, maybe back to Connecticut, maybe back to his house in the country. Nothing was left at the dump.

He threw it in the river!

I don't get it.

— John Sellew

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Personal Notes

This month's birthday greetings go to **Stefan Grotz** on the 1st, **Susan Sellew** and **Graham** and **Madigan Hines** on the 3rd, **Karen Schulze** on the 5th, **Jacob Edelman** and **Simon Spagnoletti** on the 7th, **Michael Mielke** on the 8th, **Natasha Grotz** on the 12th, **Stacy Ingher** and **Morgan Clawson** on the 20th, **Don Amstead** on the 25th, **Jon Sylbert** on the 26th, **Eliana Schulze** and **Eloisa Shapiro** on the 27th, and **Jon Pratt** on the 28th. (Remember, if you want to see your name or the name of a family member or friend here, please send in the name and birth date—we'll add it to our list. The same goes for anniversaries and birth announcements.)

Happy Anniversary to **Glynis Oliver and Will Marsh** on the 27th.

Congratulations to the cast and crew of *Much Ado About Nothing,* this year's collaboration between Shakespeare & Company and Mt. Everett Regional High School. They did an outstanding job. Monterey students involved were Adam Schoenfarber as Conrade, attendant to Don John, Clayton Squire as Corporal Clayton, and Tenji Kushi as Don Pedro, the Prince. Clayton also was film director, cinematographer, and one of the dance captains. Tenji doubled as the sound design engineer, and Adam did his share of fund-raising.

—Deborah Mielke

Marta Makuc

Monterey kindergarten celebrating Winnie-the-Pooh's birthday at Monterey Library

Notice to Readers

Web Site Not Us

As this issue goes to press, it has come to my attention that an Internet site is being set up using the name MontereyNews.org. Readers of the *Monterey News* should be aware that this site is not operated by the *Monterey News* and in no way has anything to do with this paper or with views or articles published in it. The site is operated by part-time Monterey resident Glenn M. Heller.

Our community newspaper is now in its thirty-first year of providing a way for townspeople and our neighbors in surrounding towns to converse about town news, activities, and other concerns. Mr. Heller evidently has been unable to come up with an original name for his web site and has chosen to use our name. He also is prominently displaying the Monterey Town Seal on the site. If you choose to visit the site you might want to let him know what you think about all of this. You also are encouraged to write us with your thoughts.

Mr. Heller also operates a web site using the name WAMC.net, which has no connection with the public radio station.

— Will Marsh
Editor, *Monterey News*

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Calendar

Every Thursday: People's Pantry, 11:30 a.m.–1 p.m., St. Peter's Parish, 16 Russell St., Great Barrington. Free food for the needy.

Tuesday, December 4: Renewable Energy Forum, 7–9 p.m., Cranwell Resort and Conference Center, Lenox. Kevin Knobloch of Union of Concerned Scientists will speak on energy use and climate change. Free and open to public. See p. 8.

Monday, December 10: First day of Hanukkah.

Thursday, December 13: Free blood pressure clinic, 2:30–3:30 p.m., Town Hall, administered by Visiting Nurses Assoc. **(Please note change in day and time.)**

Community potluck dinner, 6 p.m., Meetinghouse basement. Everyone please come.

Friday, December 21:
Winter Solstice

Monterey Food Co-op order distribution and pickup, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Meetinghouse basement.

Saturday, December 22: No contradance this month.

Tuesday, December 25: Have a Merry Christmas.

Wednesday, December 26: Kwanza begins.

Sunday, December 30: Full Moon.

Contributors

We thank the following people for their recent contributions. You are what keeps us going.

Nan Merrill
Eleanor Brooks
Tracy Brennan
Leonard & Susan Johnson
Ruth Roesenblatt
Harriet Harvey

The Observer

October 26–November 25

High temp. (10/26)	69°
Low temp. (11/14)	20°
Avg. high temp.	50.9°
Avg. low temp.	31.9°
Total rainfall	1.31"

Precipitation occurred on 10 days.

* * *

Glynis Oliver

Maggie of Lowland Farm exploring Rawson Brook

Transfer Station Hours

Sunday ..... 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Wednesday ..... 8 a.m.–1 p.m.
Saturday ..... 8 a.m.–1 p.m.

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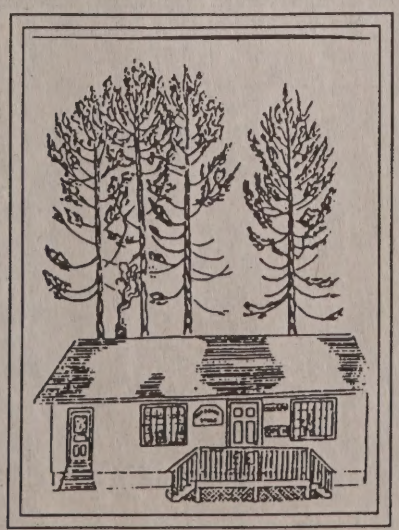

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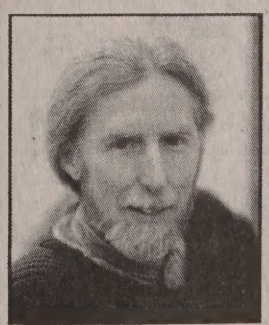

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Our editorial address is *Monterey News*, P. O. Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245. We invite letters, articles, drawings, poetry, and photographs from readers. Please send submissions (on PC disk if possible) by the fifteenth of the month before publication, addressed to the attention of the Editor. Send any change of address, or initial request to receive the *News* by mail (free!) to Barbara Tryon, Business Manager. We will typeset a text-only ad for your Monterey-based business, service, or event, or advertisers may submit an ad with graphics on a PC formatted disk. Address your request for advertising rates and further information to the Editor, or telephone us in Monterey at 413-528-4347.

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Contributions from local artists this month: George Emmons, p. 16; Bonner McAllester, p. 15.

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